

THERMOSTAT OR THERMOMETER?

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What Should a Christian Look Like? Pt1

(**HOOK**) When I was a kid in school, I was socially ambiguous. I very often did not fit in anywhere. I could easily slip into any table in the lunchroom, minus the ones with the kids that bullied me. I'd be a chameleon, hoping no one would notice me. I would be a thermometer...simply displaying the temperature of the room. I was mirroring the temperature of the people around me. I did what they did.

Then, on my journey of development, I learned about becoming the thermostat. I learned how to set the temperature of the room. People wouldn't change me, I'd change people.

Today, through God's Word, I hope to teach you how to set the temperature rather than to just be a slave to the thermometer.

Being a thermostat is no small feat. In fact, it's very difficult. I'm legally required to give you a

disclaimer...people aren't always going to like you. But the best part is, you're going to show people who Christ is through you. You will truly be different.

What makes a Christian different, socially?

- **We live knowing we have a purpose:**

Jeremiah 1:5 says

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

- Though God is talking to Jeremiah, the Living Word is speaking to you. You have a purpose that separates you. You were appointed before you were even born.

- **We build Intentional friendships**

- Believers must be cautious of who they spend their time with and by whom they are influenced.
- Believers must build friendships based on the intentional sharing of values. Have you ever

gotten advice from an unbeliever? It's better to have friends who you know get everything from the Bible

- **We marry on a mission**

- I am not married, so the last thing I'd be qualified to do is tell you about marriage. I'm sure you could tell me a few things about marriage.
- One thing I've learned from years of intense observation is that **a marriage on a mission starts with addition. A marriage without direction is multiplication.** Here's how: $1 \times 1 = 1$. If you take one person without direction and double it, you still have no direction. $1 + 1 = 2$. If you have one believer on a mission and add another on the same journey, you are now moving forward.

Our focus today is going to be on building intentional friendships. Where do they start? Where are they going?

Three Levels to Christian Social Life:

1. Who is in you?
2. Who is around you?
3. Who you impact?

Let's work backwards and start with who you impact.

When sinners met Jesus, they change. He doesn't change. Jesus impacted the world before He was here, while He was here, and after He left this earth. ***But, He never left us.*** People came to Jesus for what He could do and in turn, they learned who He is. All these people had a different place in Jesus' life than the disciples did. How do we model this? As believers in a modern world, how do we make an impact without making everyone our friend?

(**BOOK**) ***1 Timothy 4:11-16***

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect your gift, which was

given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Start with being the kind of Christian that others want to be like, to learn from, and to spend time with. This passage is what The Rising is fundamentally based upon. So what happens when we don't live up to this standard? There's nothing worse than a believer who knows what to do yet doesn't do it. It's better to be an unbeliever who doesn't yet know the truth than to be one who claims to know and does nothing about it.

Christianity is not a spectator sport...stop hiding!

You impact the people around you. Pray for them, give freely to them, and the best gift of all...give the gospel and allow God to do what He does best. He saves!

(LOOK) Second point, we focus on who is around us.

- “Show me your friends and I will show you who you are”
- “You are the sum total of the five people you spend the most time with”

These are timeless quotes to help us understand that our inner circle either builds us up or breaks us down:

- **Proverbs 13:20** says “Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”

Surround yourself with people who are wise, because you’ll be the next wise person. But that’s not the difficult part. The difficult part is letting go of the people who are in your inner circle who are dragging you down. They are the ones who only calls you when they need something. They are energy drainers, and they always have excuses. Maybe they are a friend you’ve had since high school who you hang out with

by default but they have nothing positive or uplifting to add.

Is this the season for letting people go? Let them fall off your tree because God will use you, but if you allow yourself to stick to the standard of the people close to you who aren't going places, you're limiting how God can use you. Make a friend who prays over people. Find a friend who isn't afraid to open their mouth and throw their hands up in worship. We all could use friends like that. Those are the friends that won't hold you back. In fact, they are the friends who propel you forward into God's calling on your life. They are thermostats with you! And we are all set to the same temperature...on fire for Jesus!

Lastly, the key to a great Christian social life is who is in you.

- **1 John 4:4** (KJV) says "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

- **Matthew 16:13-20** says “13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” 14 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

(**TOOK**) The God who is in you is the God who looked at Peter and from the moment Peter could tell Jesus who He is, Jesus changed his name and told him that on YOU, I will build My church. Peter means “rock” in the Greek language. Jesus is telling Peter that it starts with him...and the gates of hell don't get a voice in the matter. It will not prevail.

God is looking at you right now asking, “Do you know who I am?”. If you know who Jesus is, from YOU is the start of something bigger than yourself. You're the thermostat that sets the temperature for everyone around you. You are the one who prays and the one who gives. **You are the voice of reason in a world tearing itself apart, because greater is He who is in YOU than he who is in the world.**